

Nimuendajú: The Tukuna

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224 The Indians go in twos and threes on these hunts. In the jungle close to the
 262 settlements, the agouti (*Dasyprocta* sp.) is the most common game; after that, a
 136 rodent, the paca (*Coelogenys paca*), and the raccoon, coati (*Nasua socialis*). With
 some persistence the Tukuna are still able to collect for the obligatory roasts
 (moquedo) of the feasts enough monkeys of the following species: prego (*Cebus*
sp.), barrigudo (*Lagothrix* sp.), coatá (*Ateles* sp.), paraucá (*Pithecia* sp.), and
 guariba (*Alouatta* sp.).

The following animals are so rare as to lack economic importance: corndú
 (*Cercolabes* sp.); anteater, mambira (*Myrmecophaga tetradactyla*); armadillo,
 tatá (*Dasyus* sp.). The otter, lontra (*Pteronera* sp.), another enemy of fisher-
 men, is never eaten.

223 Of feathered game the most important are a forest turkey, the mutum (*Mitua*
 262 *mitu*); the jacú (*Penelope* sp.); and wild pigeons (*Columba* sp.; *Leptoptila* sp.).
 136 The red and yellow macaws, araras (*Ara macao* and *A. ararauna*, respectively),
 parrots (*Amazona* sp.), parakeets (*Conurus* sp.), toucans (*Rhamphastos* sp.), and
 japú (*Ostinops decumanus*, Pall.) are killed more for their feathers than for their
 flesh.

The vulture, urubú (*Cathartes urubu*), is not eaten, nor are the ankumá (*Pal-
 amedes cornuta*) or the cigana (*Opisthocomus hoazin*).

225 As for caimans, the Indians will occasionally eat the young of the species called
 262 jacaré-tinga (*Caiman yacare*) by the Neobrazilians. The tortoise, jaboti (*Testudo*
 136 *tabulata*), is little used. The Tukuna will eat some species of snakes.

136 **Weapons.**—Almost all the Indians now hunt with firearms, some with simple
 411 muzzle-loading smoothbores, others with good, breech-loading; double-barrelled
 pieces. Very infrequently some still use the blowgun, carauatana, originally their
 national weapon for small game, above all, for monkeys.

411 The Tukuna blowgun (i'ü) is the largest of all those known, being usually more
 322 than 3 m. long. With the aid of tools now at their disposal, the Tukuna manufacture
 it as follows. The material they prefer is a solid-ground jungle tree called punau
 (*Iryanthera tricornis*, Ducke; T., pu'rune), lacking which they substitute the wood
 of the bacabinka (*Oenocarpus multicaulis* Spr. f.), called in Tukuna "nyä." They
 bring to the house a piece of sufficient size, trim it, and later work it into the shape
 of a long, slender rod with four planed surfaces, 3.5 m. long by 7 cm. After sawing
 this lengthwise through the center, they gouge out a longitudinal furrow some
 6 cm. wide from end to end in each section. Near the house, they then seek a tree,
 which should have a thick, more or less horizontal limb about 6 m. above the ground.
 From this limb they stretch a length of cipó guembé (*Philodendron* sp.) vertically
 to the ground, and lash a beam to it horizontally just above the ground, its weight
 keeping the cipó taut.

Around this length of peeled cipó they erect a platform of saplings, permitting
 a craftsman to stand erect, close to the cipó and about 2.5 m. above the ground;
 another man stays on the ground below. To the length of cipó they then bind the
 two lengths of wood, with the grooved sides facing inward, and pour over them
 water containing sand. The two pieces, now strongly bound together so as to form
 one unit, they pull up and down, keeping the cipó tightly stretched. With this

"On p. 19 the author calls this *Emys tabulata* as well.—Trans."

continued movement the sand widens and deepens the grooves, so that in time the binding has to be drawn tauter until finally the two sections of wood close completely about the cipó. This labor, which is very tiring since it lasts four days, is carried on invariably by two men, one standing on the platform, the other below, working just as if they were sawing boards in a sawmill. [411] 322

Removing the grooved pieces from the scaffolding, but always keeping the cipó bound within, they untie and retie the lashings, section by section, reducing the piece to a round shape instead of the former square shape, the thickness varying from 1 to 1.5 cm. at the muzzle and from 3.5 to 4 cm. at the breech. They then cut off a section at each end—since here the abrasive action of the sand and movement always widens the bore a little too much—and with wax they firmly join the two halves. The two lengths they then bind spirally on the outside, from end to end, with a strip about 3 cm. wide from the smooth cipó guembé, and coat the whole with wax again.

At the breech they add a mouthpiece of *mikirapiranga* wood (*Cesalpinia echinata*; *condurú de sangue*) in the shape of a hollow spool. About 10 cm. from this they affix a sight made of wax, with a tooth of the squirrel, *acutipurú* (*Sciurus* sp.), set longitudinally with the convex side up. [237]

Finally, they polish the barrel with a long wad of dried maize leaves with a cord tied at each end. Placing the blowgun in a horizontal position, two persons, each grasping an end of the cord, pull the wad back and forth through the bore until the desired result is obtained.

The Tukuna blowgun never has jaguar (*onça*) teeth at the mouthpiece as Tesmann was informed, nor is the muzzle funnel-shaped, as in the plate of Barbosa Rodrigues. [114]

In the house the blowgun is bound parallel to and pressed flat against a roof pillar, where it is tied at the top and bottom by two loops of cord. In order to remove any curvature, small wedges are inserted at the precise spot necessary between the weapon itself and the post to which it is lashed. When the weapon is not in use, the cleaning rod is generally left inside it.

I greatly admired the agility of the Tukuna in running through the jungle with this weapon, for its length makes it a clumsy thing to carry, and it is too fragile to stand strong knocks. But the Indians shift it from above the head to one side or the other, never knocking it against a tree trunk, and do not appear to be inconvenienced. [411] 482

The dart (*ôa'gu*) for the blowgun is about 30 cm. long and 2 mm. thick. A twist of kapok, *sumakuma* (*Ceiba pentandra*), is rolled on at the rear end; below the point of the dart a small circular notch is cut so that the tip will break off in a wound. [411]

The darts are kept in a long, small, cylindrical basket, *ajava* (*yo'ru*), with a square bottom and a round mouth. The outside is covered with wax and has tied to it a small sack which contains kapok. The Tukuna do not attach the little curare container shown in Barbosa Rodrigues' plate, since, before leaving the house, they always poison the number of darts they calculate will be needed. They spread the poison on the tip of the dart with a small spatula, then lay the darts so treated [415] [114]

The sewing is done with an eyed bone needle and tucum thread. For certain types of disguises, trouser legs are made from the same piece, and sleeves of attached pieces are obligatory. Some forms cover the wearer from the head to the middle of the calf with one section. Some of these also have sleeves, others only lateral openings through which the arms are thrust. In still others the wearer's arms remain within the garment, being held close to the body and invisible. Those which do not cover the head are closed about the neck by a threaded string; the garments covering the head have the face represented in the appropriate place on the same piece. The costumes with the head fashioned as a separate section have a kind of cap or sack of tururi that covers the entire head to the breast.

In manufacturing face masks, no matter what the design may be, the Tukuna seem to vie with one another in producing the most horrible countenances, with cheeks of black pitch from the *wnani* (*Moronobea* sp.), protuberant eyes of mirror fragments (formerly bits of mother-of-pearl), great, circular, protruding ears, an enormous, hooked or pointed nose, and a distorted mouth with huge, threatening teeth.

Other masks simply have a face painted on the tururi. Further, a few face masks carved of wood (for example, those which represent the sun) have pleasant, human features. Still other masks cover only the head to the torso with one piece, but enlarge the stature of the invisible wearer to the height of two and a half meters by means of a body woven of *urumã* strips that rests on the bearer's shoulders. This type ends in an artificial head, which always represents some animal, and never the grimace of a demon.

All the costumes, whether they end in trouser legs or a skirt, have at the hem fringes of *envira de matamatá* or tururi, which fall to, or almost to, the ground.

The most characteristic motifs represented are the following:

õ'ma, the demon of the wind. (Pl. 16, a.) The costume is always of red tururi, with legs and sleeves and with few designs. It is equipped with an erect phallus a half meter in length, slightly conical in shape, and testicles the size of a closed fist. It is with this phallus that Wind knocks down the trees of the jungle. The face mask is enormous, seventy centimeters or more in length, and of corresponding width. The ears are almost a half meter in diameter. I also saw one costume that had on its head an enormous bush of vines and second-growth plants which made it even more disproportionate. In his hand *õ'ma* bears a globular whistle (pl. 16, d) with an attached air tube, made of a small calabash and a bamboo tube, the whole covered with tururi. With this instrument, which produces a low, mournful cry, he imitates the noise of a storm. Especially when the hour approaches to hand over the mask, *õ'ma* attacks the spectators with his phallus, particularly the men, since the women soon flee, and tries to knock them down during the pursuit. If he turns against the women, it may happen that one of the more resolute, amid general hilarity, will seize and hold him by the phallus. Speaking in Portuguese to the Neobrazilians, the Tukuna call *õ'ma* the "Mother [!] of the Wind."

bũru, the female butterfly demon. (Pl. 17, b.) This demon is also represented in a red tururi costume with sleeves and trouser legs. On the chest are painted the elongated breasts that characterize her. On the outside of both sleeves is a wheel of *cipó*, 60 cm. in diameter and covered with tururi, representing the wings. The face mask, however, is much smaller than that of the preceding costume. The nose is fashioned of a spiraled strip of liana, in imitation of a butterfly's proboscis.

dyẽ'vãc, the water demon. (Pl. 16, c.) This figure is 2.6 m. tall, not counting the feelers. It has neither arms nor legs. The head, which resembles that of a catfish, has a mouth opened upward and is garnished with long feelers.

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The Spots on the Moon

539 In one of the large malocas in the old days there lived, among other persons, a boy with his sister. At night the youth secretly crept to his sister's hammock and had intercourse with her. [The houses were tightly sealed at night because of mosquitoes and therefore were completely dark.] She slept so soundly that she was unaware of anything; only in the morning did she realize what had happened because her sexual organs were moist. The following night she tried to stay awake, but failed, and the same thing happened to her as on the preceding night. At last she



Fig. 12. Jaguar and anteater. a. Carved figures on a dance staff, x $\frac{3}{4}$. b. Constellation.

became pregnant and had a son. As was the custom, she grated genipapo to paint the child black, and at night placed the pot containing the dye next to her hammock.

When in the darkness her brother came again to lie with her, she thrust her hand into the dye and rubbed it over his face. He recognized the genipapo from its odor and immediately made off to the edge of the jungle, where he picked leaves to wipe his face. As soon as he threw away a soiled leaf it turned into a forest turkey, an *anum* [*Crotophaga minor*, Gm.], or some other black-colored bird. Then he went to the creek and washed his face. For this reason the Igarapé de São Jerônimo is black even to this day. He was never again seen by anyone, but went up to the sky, where he became the moon.

Jaguar and Anteater

The jaguar once met the great banded anteater [*tamandua bandeira*] and said, "My strength is in my teeth and claws. Where is yours?" Replied the anteater, "In my arms and claws." "And where is your heart?" again inquired the jaguar. "In my arm," was the reply. The two fought.

1:Nimwendajú E-5 (1941-1942) 1952

SQ20 Tucuna SQ20

PLATE 9

Wood carvings. a. Capabira with young. b. Dolls of muirapiranga wood. c. Small bench in the form of a tortoise. d. Tucunaré and ray. a, b, d, $\times \frac{2}{3}$; c, $\times \frac{2}{12}$.

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WOOD CARVINGS

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